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SUBJECT: ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE ON CONTE'S HEALTH - WHO IS
RUNNING THE COUNTRY?

Classified By: POL/ECON CHIEF SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

11. (S) During a meeting with Poloff on April 9, Nicolas Kazadi, the Economic Counselor for the UN Mission in Guinea, mentioned that he saw President Conte on April 3 with a visiting UN representative (septel). "I was absolutely shocked," Kazadi said, "and I have to ask myself who is really running the country." Kazadi, who has been assigned to Guinea for more than four years, said it was his first time meeting the president.

12. (S) Kazadi said that Conte was clearly unwell and looked as if he should be staying in a medical facility. According to Kazadi, the president was "dirty" and looked as if he is not even taking care of basic personal grooming. "His fingernails were long and yellow, he was not even wearing any shoes and he had his leg propped up on the couch," Kazadi said. Poloff asked about the leg and Kazadi confirmed that it was a dark, unhealthy black color. He noticed some sort of local salve remedy applied to the skin and said it did not look like the president is treating it according to modern medical practices.

13. (S) Although the president was reportedly engaged throughout the discussion, Kazadi said that Conte's hands continually shook and that he proceeded to chain smoke four cigarettes in a 20 minute period.

COMMENT

14. (S) Embassy continues to hear comparable reports regarding Conte's current state of health. Kazadi's observations were similar, although more detailed, than that of his UN colleague Gerard Latortue (septel). Kazadi told Poloff that Conte did not look at all presidential and repeatedly questioned how a man in his condition could effectively lead the government. END COMMENT.
CARTER